



2

STUDY
PROJECT

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

FIDEL CASTRO: COMMUNIST OR CAUDILLO?

BY

COMMANDER JOHN T. NAWROCKI
United States Navy

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: Approved for public release.
Distribution is unlimited.

USAWC CLASS OF 1991

DTIC
ELECTE
JUN 11 1991
S B D



U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA 17013-5050

91-01640



REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified			1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS		
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY			3. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.		
2b. DECLASSIFICATION / DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE			5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)		
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)			7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION		
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION U.S. Army War College		6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable) USAWC	7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Same as 6a		
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050			9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER		
8a. NAME OF FUNDING / SPONSORING ORGANIZATION		8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable)	10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS		
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)		PROGRAM ELEMENT NO. PROJECT NO. TASK NO. WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.			
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) FIDEL CASTRO: COMMUNIST OR CAUDILLO?					
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) Commander John Nawrocki, United States Navy					
13a. TYPE OF REPORT Individual Study Project		13b. TIME COVERED FROM _____ TO _____		14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 91-04-08	
				15. PAGE COUNT 20	
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION					
17. COSATI CODES			18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)		
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP			
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) Ever since Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba, scholars have strived to corroborate how and why he did it and to analyze what his prospects for continuing in power will be. This Individual Study Project attempts to determine how his educational and social backgrounds contributed to his adaptive style of leadership (as a head of state) and whether he became a Communist out of ideological beliefs or for other reasons. It also endeavors to answer specific questions about his political philosophy, his durability as a leader, his humanistic tendencies and his plans for making his revolution work. This MSP concludes with an assessment of Castro's importance to Cuba, present and future.					
20. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT. <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS			21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified		
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL George H. Allport, Colonel, U.S. Army			22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) (717) 245-3022		22c. OFFICE SYMBOL FWC AB

UNCLASSIFIED

USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

FIDEL CASTRO: COMMUNIST OR CAUDILLO?

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

Commander John T. Nawrocki
United States Navy

Colonel George S. Allport
Project Adviser

U.S. Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

UNCLASSIFIED

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: John T. Nawrocki, Commander, USN
TITLE: FIDEL CASTRO: COMMUNIST OR CAUDILLO
FORMAT: Individual Study Project
DATE: 08 April 1991
PAGES: 20
CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

Ever since Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba, scholars have strived to corroborate how and why he did it and to analyze what his prospects for continuing in power will be. This Individual Study Project attempts to determine how his educational and social backgrounds contributed to his adaptive style of leadership (as a head of state) and whether he became a Communist out of ideological beliefs or for other reasons. It also endeavors to answer specific questions about his political philosophy, his durability as a leader, his humanistic tendencies and his plans for making his revolution work. This MSP concludes with an assessment of Castro's importance to Cuba, present and future.



Accession For	
NTIS GRA&I	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>
DTIC TAB	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unannounced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Justification	
By _____	
Distribution/	
Availability Codes	
Dist	Avail and/or Special
A-1	

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Military Studies Project is to make a biographical study of the life and ideology of the Latin-American revolutionary, Fidel Castro. I will start by giving an outline of his life and go into his political background in brief, with the intention of showing how he developed his particular style. Additionally, I will focus on his adaptive style of leadership, and how he might change to conform with current events.

I will continue with his youth and university days in order to shed light upon how his "practical" education might have affected his views in later life. Next, I will explain the origins of Castroism, and how it evolved to its present state. Then, I will endeavor to answer several challenging questions about his political concepts. First: What, if anything, foreshadowed the coming of Communism? Second: Did Castro really believe in, and intend to fulfill his pledges of "free elections, freedom of the press, etc." from his "Manifesto of the Sierra Maestra"? Third: What makes Castro different from other Latin-American dictators such that he stands out among his predecessors and contemporaries? Fourth: What role does "Humanism" play in Castro's leadership? Fifth: How did Castro expect to make his revolution work? Sixth: How does he expect to make his regime survive?

As a means of tying my Study together, I will conclude by summarizing Castro's political make-up and assess his prospects for future government.

EARLY LIFE AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND

Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz was born August 13, 1926 on a sugar plantation near Biran, Cuba, on the north coast of Oriente, one of Cuba's most eastern provinces. He was the son of the owner of that plantation, Angel Castro Argiz. Though Fidel came from a very well-to-do family, from the first, he disliked the "latifundia" system which was characterized by large land holdings, primitive agriculture, absentee ownership and labor often in a state of partial servitude. This is illustrated by the fact that, in 1939, at age thirteen, he reportedly organized a strike of the sugar workers on his father's plantation.¹ Castro seemed to resent his father's status as a "latifundista" (a wealthy landowner who exploited the peasants, who paid no tax on his land or income, and who played politics for money)², and I think that this part of his background gives us much insight into why Fidel later came to advocate agrarian reform so avidly. In fact, in 1957, when Castro was struggling for power, he included his parents' plantation in activities which were intended to break up the latifundia system. "It was to be total war, burning and destroying everything in our path so that the government could feel our power..."³. To illustrate the fact that Fidel was not just trying to get even with his father by this violent act, however, I cite Tad Szulc's Fidel, a critical portrait, which says Fidel's childhood appears to have been very pleasant and happy. He obviously had many fond memories of his youth, the Castro children seem to have received much love from their

parents and they clearly were spoiled. ⁴ The point here is that Fidel's principles, rather than the animosity he felt towards his father, led him to make war against the latifundia system.

Twelve years in preparatory schools under the tutelage of French Marianist and Jesuit taskmasters also left a profound impression on young Fidel. He was attracted by their tough discipline and the absoluteness of their power.⁵ Later, Castro enrolled at Havana University, this period of his life is very vague. Castro himself has said almost nothing about these years, apart from accounts of his conversion to Marxism. But from his first days on campus, Castro is remembered as a serious and intense young man, over six feet tall, powerfully built, very excitable and prone to violence.⁶ This is where Fidel started his political career. Universities traditionally are a hotbed of political activity in Latin-American countries. Cuba in general, and Havana University in particular, are no exception to this rule. Castro unsuccessfully ran for an elective post in the University Students' Federation (FEU). He was unable to be a team player in politics and therefore none of the politically organized student groups wanted to risk supporting him. He was too unreliable and unpredictable. Ironically, even the Communists at the university, including his best friends, refused to back him in elections.⁷ There were, however, other avenues of political power at Havana University which sought to enlist Fidel in their organizations. Specifically, the Union Insurreccional Revolucionaria (UIR) and the Movimiento Socialista Revolucionaria (MSR), who sought control of the University campus as a means to

further their anti-Communist and anti-U.S. political agendas, were "gangs" competing for national political prominence. Fidel, fully cognizant of their power and their ability to assist his political ambitions and, according to acquaintances from that time, not averse to their violent methods, tried initially to get support from both without making a full commitment to either. Fidel's attempt to use, but remain independent from, the UIR and the MSR led him into direct conflict with the more powerful MSR. At this point, whether in self-defense against the MSR, or merely because he felt that their help was now more beneficial to his political career, Fidel became closely associated with the UIR.⁸ In my opinion, at this point, Castro was an aspiring Caudillo (a military dictator, in Spanish-speaking countries), but he was becoming a well-known one, and this publicity was not detrimental to him... in spite of the fact that most of it was bad. Fidel also profited from the experiences he had gained with elective politics and political gangsterism during his university years, both of which contributed to his developing an "adaptive" political style. An "adaptive" style is one which undergoes change to fit a new or special use or situation. From the first, Castro was, in my opinion, more of a manipulator than an idealist. This is illustrated by the "middle of the road" approach he tried to put into practice with the UIR and MSR. He ultimately adapted himself (albeit for the time being) to the one which best suited his political convenience.

ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF CASTROISM

The actual beginnings of what we know as Castroism (Castro's emergence as an independent political figure with his own personal following) did not come about until July 26, 1953. This was the date of the unsuccessful attack on the Moncada army post in Santiago de Cuba designed to bring about the ouster of Fulgencio Batista, the dictatorial leader of Cuba.

Five years prior to this abortive assault, Castro attended a student planning session in preparation for the Ninth Inter-American Conference in Bogota, Colombia. The period of this planning session was probably a decisive point in Castro's political development because in Bogota, Fidel participated in massive street violence that occurred when a popular Colombian politician, Jorge Eliecer Gaitan, was assassinated. The action he took part in, turned him away from campus politics and toward national political activities when he returned to Cuba in April 1948. He had become fascinated with the thrill of violent political upheaval, and from that time forward was a firm believer in insurrection as a means of grasping political power. Although he spent the ensuing four years completing his Law degree, practicing law and campaigning for elective office, Castro never lost sight of the rioting and street warfare he had experienced earlier in Colombia. When Batista staged a military coup, in March of 1952, siezed control of the Cuban Government and canceled the elections which were scheduled to take place, Castro had the excuse he needed to put into practice the theories

of insurrection that had been fermenting since 1948 in Bogota.

Secretly, he started planning the revolution and recruiting his forces. He decided upon the Moncada army barracks, in the western city of Pinar del Rio, as his target because he knew that arms would be required to sustain the effort. For reasons beyond the scope of this paper, the mission was a dreadful failure. As a consequence of it, however, the "26th of July Movement" had been born, and its leader, although incarcerated for the subsequent twenty months, was taking advantage of the period to collect and articulate his political agenda in writing.

WHAT FORESHADOWED THE COMING OF COMMUNISM?

Castro actually wrote his "History Will Absolve Me" speech, originally delivered at his trial in October 1953, while imprisoned at the Isle of Pines. This speech was the basis for a clandestinely published pamphlet that provided a program of action for the "Movement". Politically, the pamphlet promised restoration of the 1940 Constitution of Cuba and a "government of popular election." In agriculture, it mainly advocated a land reform to restrict large holdings and increase the number of smaller ones. It made reference to the encouragement of "agricultural cooperatives," by which it meant service organizations for independent landowners, rather than organs of state control. The most radical note of the speech was perhaps a reference to the "nationalization" of the U.S. owned electric and telephone companies.⁹ Many journalists believed that this

program in many ways foreshadowed the advent of Communism into Castro's platform. However, a closer look reveals that this program was little more than a restatement of Eduardo Chibas' (founder of Ortodoxo party, the party to which Castro at that time still nominally belonged) political foundation. The Ortodoxo party was reformist and radical but essentially an establishment organization that attracted great numbers of working-class and middle-class Cubans.¹⁰ These followers would be needed if Castro's revolution were to establish any credibility in the years to come. Castro later claimed that he had written his document "with care" in order to set forth a number of fundamental points without making the movement he wanted to build "very small and limited." He intimated that his published words had not been as radical as his private thoughts. "If we had not written this document with care, if it had been a more radical program -though here it is certain that many people were a little skeptical of programs and often did not give them much attention - the revolutionary movement against Batista would not, of course, have gained the breadth that it obtained and made possible the victory."¹¹

Castro obviously was using hindsight when he claimed that he had been a Communist all along. Naturally he would say that, after he had committed himself to the Communist philosophy in 1959, but I feel that he had betrayed himself much earlier, in 1954, to be exact. He really was not a Communist. At that time he was trying to gain support for his campaign for amnesty by

getting news commentators to aid him. In his correspondence with Luis Conte Aguero, a popular radio broadcaster, he wrote:

"I ought to organize the men of the 26th of July and to unite into an unbreakable body, all the fighters, those in exile, in prison, and in the street....."

They would constitute "a perfectly disciplined human nucleus" and provide "the force necessary to conquer power, whether it be by peaceful or by revolutionary means."

"The indispensable conditions for the organization of a true civic movement are: ideology, discipline, and leadership. The three are essential, but leadership is basic. I don't know if it was Napoleon who said that one bad general in battle counts more than twenty good generals. It is not possible to organize a movement in which everyone believes that he has the right to issue public statements without consulting anyone else; nor can anything be expected of one made up of anarchic men who at the first disagreement take the path they consider more convenient, breaking and destroying the machine. The apparatus of propaganda and of organization should be such and so powerful that it would implacably destroy anyone who tries to create tendencies, cliques, schisms, or rebels against the movement."¹²

This candid statement which offers great insight into Castro's true motivation, demonstrates that he clearly considered leadership to be of paramount importance, and ideology to be of

lesser significance. How could he have been a profound Communist if he thought so little of ideology? According to Henry Kissinger, an authority on political thought, in his essay Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy, the essence of Communism is the view that "objective factors" such as the social structure, the economic process, and above all, the class struggle are more important than the personal convictions of statesmen. Castro is ambiguous when he says that he professes to be a Communist and an advocate of the powerful leader at the same time because to the true Communist, ideology is basic. For this reason it becomes hard to imagine Castro as a practicing Communist during his time in prison and the years that followed. I feel that he was still an aspiring despot with Communism the furthest thing from his mind. This analysis further supports my hypothesis that Castro is a chameleon who changes his philosophy to conform with the prevailing circumstances.

MANIFESTO OF THE SIERRA MAESTRA

Castro's next important statement of policy was his Manifesto of the Sierra Maestra. Published in 1957, after he had broken with Chibas and the Ortodoxo party. It reiterated the provisions of the Constitution of 1940 as "the supreme law of the land," and promised "absolute guarantee of freedom of information, both of newspaper and radio, and of all the political rights guaranteed by the Constitution," and a provisional government that "will hold general elections... at the end of one year under the norms

of the Constitution of 1940 and the Electoral Code of 1943 and will deliver the power immediately to the candidate elected." Castro's program, in short, promised a free and democratic Cuba dedicated to social and economic justice.¹³ The "Manifesto" provided a program for the 26th of July Movement and fragmented members of the Ortodoxo party to rally around. To assure the lofty goals of the "Manifesto", Castro's rebel army maintained itself in the hills fighting a guerrilla war while the Cuban people turned against Batista ; all elements of the revolution in the end supported the 26th of July Movement.¹⁴ Now the question arises: Did Castro really intend to fulfill his pledges? For a moment the Castro regime seemed determined to make good on at least its social promises. The positive programs initiated in the first months of the Castro regime - the schools built, the medical clinics established, the new housing, the early projects of land reform, the elimination of graft in government - were impressive in their execution. But so far as the expressed political aims of the revolution were concerned, the record of the Castro regime has been a record of the steady and consistent betrayal of prerevolutionary promises.¹⁵ In my opinion, the "Manifesto" was another of Castro's deceptions intended to patronize the maximum number of constituents so as to consolidate his political power base and facilitate his seizure of the government. In an obvious way the "Manifesto of the Sierra Maestra" was deceiving. It was a compromise between opposing factions who needed a united front to continue their fight against a common enemy. Accordingly, it serves as another

illustration of how Castro adapts his style to conform with the prevailing circumstances rather than honor his commitments. For this reason, I do not feel that he ever really believed in, or intended to fulfill the pledges made in the "Manifesto of the Sierra Maestra."

WHAT MAKES CASTRO STAND OUT?

In turning our attention to what makes Castro so different from Latin-American dictators in general, we find that first of all, he was an insurrectionist. According to Webster, this means that he advocated "acts of open revolt against established authority, as a government." He believed that armed struggle was the only way to get rid of a usurper. Rather than using peaceful methods which might somehow lead to general elections, Castro stood for the use of force. By no means did this alone cause him to stand out among other Latin-American strongmen; it was his methods that made him different. In general, revolutionaries have tried to assassinate their enemies or defeat them by capturing the country's main military base. Castro did neither, he started from the bottom and worked his way up... though not through his own choice. Ironically, his last resort was guerilla warfare and this proved to be the most successful avenue for him. To overthrow the Cuban dictator, Batista, Castro tried several tactics ranging from an attack on the remote Moncada Army Barracks in 1953, to an invasion from the sea in 1956. Both "traditional" insurrectionist methods failed him. Only when he

was forced to retreat into the mountains with a small handful of cohorts, was Castro able to bring about the defeat of Batista's army. This was done, strangely enough, in a psychological manner. When, after five months of fighting against Castro's forces they were still unable to defeat Castro, Batista's military forces collapsed, their morale was broken by the cumulative effect of all the opposition efforts to depose Batista. Castro was the beneficiary of the uprising of a hostile people, dissension in the military, and the military pressure brought to bear on the government by his own poorly armed forces. Thus, armed struggle, away from the center of Cuban political and military power; against rather than inside of the regular army; with the ultimate aim of stirring up a mass, - and - general rebellion against the existing regime rather than merely eliminating its head were the distinctive marks of Castro's revolution.¹⁶

The other major difference between Castro and other Latin-American dictators is his involvement with Communism. This phenomenon is certainly unique, for with the ouster of Daniel Ortega's Sandinista government in Nicaragua, Cuba remains the only Communist country in Latin-America, not to mention the entire Western Hemisphere. Yet, Communism was not the cause of Castro's revolution; it was the result. Cuba was the first country in the world to become Communist of its own accord after its leaders had taken power. As in the distinction of his use of guerilla warfare, Cuba did not become Communist because it wanted to; Communism was the only solution Castro could find to cope with the pressure of problems and events which beset him once he

had gained power. In early 1959, Castro sought to contend with circumstances without resorting to Communist methods. Castro was well aware of the U.S. predisposition to intervene in the Caribbean and he wanted to avoid this. He bent over backwards not to alienate the United States by characterizing his revolution as non-Communist. In Castro's own words: "When we say that our revolution is not Communist, when we show that our ideals do not belong to Communist doctrine, that the revolution is original, that it has its own philosophy, completely its own, that it is Cuban and entirely American, why then is there this determination to accuse our revolution of being something that it is not?"¹⁷ This may have been a bold-faced lie, but when it became apparent to him that Washington would not be forthcoming with economic aid due to the perception that Castro was sponsoring revolution in the Dominican Republic, he had to take U.S. resistance into account. Moreover, the situation described above did not permit him to let his adversary (the U.S.) take the initiative, because of the enormous disparity of power between them, and because of the fundamental weakness of his own revolution.¹⁸ Accordingly, when Castro "officially" declared Cuba a Socialist country in April 1961, preparations were already under way for the socialist transformation of the economy and for the military bonding of Cuba to the Communist block.¹⁹

Even after 1961, Castro's revolution seemed to exude a sense of originality in its approach to Communism. Whereas in the Russian revolution, a relatively small working class played a relatively large role, in the Cuban revolution a relatively large

working class played a relatively small role.²⁰ In essence, Communism in Cuba is different, it operates on the assumption that the proletariat must be controlled by Castro and since Castroism eliminates competition and free elections, it seems to liken itself to the typical caudillismo so prevalent throughout Latin-America. It is true that Castro is a dictator, but as a dictator, Castro has striven for consensus, control, maximized exploitation of human resources, as well as socialization of the economy, which concentrates ownership and decision-making powers in the state. The most important element of Castroism therefore, is that Fidel Castro is the state.

THE ROLE OF HUMANISM

One of the most interesting aspects of Castro's power is his humanistic approach toward the administration of his policies. Humanism is an idealistic doctrine concerned chiefly with human beings and their values, capacities and achievements. In this vein, Castro has been absorbed in helping minorities and other under-privileged groups. Equality for Blacks has always been stressed in particular by Castro; he has been insistent upon giving blacks equal opportunity with respect to jobs, schools, apartments and clubs. This type of sensitivity has caused many Latin-Americans from other countries to be sympathetic toward the Castro regime and often to overlook its political adventurism. Because the Cuban Revolution sought to aid the poor and disenfranchised, Castro has a silent, but intensely loyal,

constituency. This following is perhaps his greatest asset, and one upon which he may some day need to count.

Humanism in government, was what Castro set out to accomplish before he came to espouse Communism and involvement with the Soviet Union. Even while he was fighting the guerilla war in the Sierra, his rebel army seemed quixotic (idealistic in a romantic way), with Fidel playing the part of the don. He ordered his charges to give medical treatment to the enemy wounded as if they were his own comrades in arms. His soldiers were not to murder, kill, torture or in any way offend prisoners. Rather, they were to explain what they were doing to them and why, in order to educate them to his cause. They were to respect the peasants, their traditions, their wives, and their goods - they had to pay for anything they took. There was an egalitarianism as well between comandantes and soldiers. Rank had no privileges. They were family, and they worked together out of respect instead of mere obedience. There were very few comandantes, so they did not constitute a class.²¹ Humanism was not a likely candidate to survive Castro's drift toward authoritarianism since it is usually associated with liberal, democratic and non-Communist policies, but fortunately and wisely, Fidel has been able to preserve one of his revolution's most admirable qualities.

Castro differs from many heads of state in his preference to mix and play with his people rather than remain aloof. One frequently hears Cubans who are having difficulty with the government say, "If I could only tell Fidel about my problem, he would solve it." There is a great deal of truth to this. At the

same time, there is a certain arrogance when he is dealing with people of pretensions; he is happy to keep even the most distinguished visitors waiting for hours or even days.²²

Castro's Humanistic approach to leadership is the essence of his charisma; it served the dual purposes of helping him to gain power (i.e. win the guerilla war) and helping him to maintain it once he had gained it, by endearing him to the people.

HOW DOES CASTRO EXPECT TO MAKE HIS REVOLUTION WORK?

Castro, as mentioned earlier, is an insurrectionist and as such, he expects to make his revolution work through "armed struggle" as opposed to "peaceful transition." But in October 1962, when the Cuban Missile crisis proved the absence of his overriding influence on a global level, Fidel's pride and prestige were dealt a severe blow. The credibility of his rebelliousness was also called into question. United States and Soviet power, in the resolution of the Missile Crisis, fixed Castro's international influence at less than a commanding level and he had no way to make up his lost prestige at their expense. Hence, the Communist caudillo decided to relieve his hurt feelings by taking out his anger on the other Latin-American Communist leaderships. He accused the other unnamed Communists of "conformism" with imperialism and "fear of revolutions."²³ Another motive for Castro's condemnation of the other Latin-American Communists was a bid to assert his individuality within the world Communist movement. To do this, Castro instructed the

Latin-American Communists on how to make revolution. His philosophy is summarized in the following four points:

1. "The masses make history," but they must be "launched into the battle" by "revolutionary leaders and organizations."
2. The Cuban masses had been launched into the struggle by "four, five six, or seven" guerillas.
3. The "objective conditions" for such a struggle exist in "the immense majority of Latin-American countries" and only the "subjective conditions" -that is, the "four, five, six or seven" willing to launch the armed struggle- are lacking.
4. "Peaceful transition" may be "possible," but there is not a single case of it on record, and in any event, armed struggle must take place in most Latin-American countries.²⁴

At last Castro had articulated his own program of action on how to make a revolution work. "Armed struggle" would be the fundamental precept for others to implement in emulation of Fidel's "Cuban success story."

HOW DOES HE EXPECT HIS REGIME TO SURVIVE?

To ensure his regime's survival, however, would be a different story. Here, I believe Castro fell back upon the tactic of adaptation. In my opinion, Fidel only used Communism as a means

to an end. That end being the consolidation of power in the void left by the overthrow of Batista. Accordingly, Castro had to be opportunistic and embrace whatever methods or resources were available to him to continue in power. Ergo the emergence of Castroism, the "cult of personality" that incorporates whatever ad hoc measures are necessary to survive. Ranging from personal charisma through Humanism to authoritarianism and "interpretive" Communist ideology, Castro exploits circumstances to his best advantage. He follows his separate road, like any caudillo, to assert his individuality, and thus far, he is no worse for the wear. Essentially, Castroism is a leader in search of a movement, a movement in search of power, and power in search of an ideology.²⁵ From its origins to the present it has had the same leader, but its modus operandi has changed with the wind. Castro's own assertion that the Cuban peoples' lack of "organization, tradition, habits, customs, ideas and mental attitude" demonstrated unpreparedness for building socialism, supports the contention that he does not have an ideological core of his own so he filled the vacuum in himself, with various ideologies to serve his power in different ways at different stages of his political career.²⁶

What will become of Cuba in the wake of Perestroika and Glasnost? As worldwide Communism collapses with the Berlin Wall, Castro's hold on power in Cuba as well as his influence on the Third World seem jeopardized with every passing day. The ability of the Soviet Union to pump massive infusions of financial aid has lapsed into a coma and made Fidel vulnerable to criticism and

opposition within Cuba. For the time being, however, I believe he will survive. Institutionalized in power, as he is, Castro retains popularity at home. Economic factors can, with time, bring about a deterioration of his regime (especially if his subordinates in government become corrupt and seek to exploit the working class of Cuba). I further believe that Fidel, as an autocrat, will pursue one of two types of strategy to perpetuate himself in power. These two strategies are as follows:

1. Tactical Pragmatism. A prudent, minimalist posture which reflects concern for his nation's security, but lacks any truly ambitious initiatives. This strategy would preserve established gains and disarm or confuse adversaries through diplomatic or political moves. It would not mean accommodation to the United States, or changes in Cuba's commitments to the Soviet Union or the abandonment of revolutionary subversion. This option is considered to be essentially defensive in nature.²⁷

2. Revolutionary Maximalism. The bold alternative to Tactical Pragmatism, Revolutionary Maximalism would once again embark upon the ambitious foreign policy objectives of:

- Leading the Third World struggle against the United States.
- Extending Cuba's influence in Africa and Latin America.
- Promoting the rise of Marxist regimes in the

Caribbean basin.

- Extending Cuba's capabilities as a regional and global actor.

- Regaining leverage vis-a-vis the Soviet Union.

These goals would be predicated largely on the employment of conventional (military) and unconventional (guerilla) forms of violence.

Violence is an essential element of Castro's modus operandi; it has led to his greatest triumphs at home and abroad, starting with the overthrow of Batista and ending with Cuba's military victories in Africa. Under this highly offensive policy mode, he would be inclined to send military and guerilla advisors abroad or to increase their present levels where currently deployed.²⁸

The strategic option Castro chooses to employ will depend on his assessment of:

1. Cuba's domestic situation.
2. U.S. foreign policy posture toward Cuba in particular and toward Latin-America in general.
3. Soviet foreign policy posture.
4. Openings in the Third World.
5. The situation facing Cuba's clients.

Of these five variables, the Soviet Union's international posture is most critical to Castro because, ultimately, Soviet policies set the basic parameters for his behavior. Still the more favorable his assessments are regarding each of these five

factors, especially on the international front and with respect to Soviet policy, the more Castro will be inclined to resume a Maximalist Revolutionary strategy. The less favorable his assessment of these five factors, the more he will be obliged to opt for tactical pragmatism and wait for more favorable developments.²⁹

Since the Soviet retrenchment from spreading Marxist revolution in 1990, the conditions for implementation of Revolutionary Maximalism have not existed. Castro could not afford to export revolution anywhere, let alone sustain revolutionary regimes, without being bankrolled by a superpower. His responsibility for maintenance of the Cuban economy will thus overshadow his aspirations for exerting hegemony over the Third World. Fidel's policy of solidarity with Latin-American revolutionaries will not, however, go away. He is far too shrewd to undermine his relationship with any insurrectionists who may represent his interests and support his causes in the future. If conditions have changed as abruptly as they have in the year 1990, they could certainly change again, just as abruptly in the other direction, in the future. If, for instance, the Gorbachev regime were overthrown in the Soviet Union and a repressive government took over, conditions might be just right again for a reversion to the Revolutionary Maximalist strategy.

The possibilities are endless, but the one thing that I feel is certain is that Fidel Castro will adapt his strategy to ensure survival of his regime. As long as Fidel lives, he will exert a charismatic influence over his Cuba. It may not be until after

his death that Cuba will have the chance to taste political pluralism. Castro has the mechanism in place to perpetuate his dominance over Cuban domestic and international affairs and, having overthrown a caudillo himself, Castro is well-informed as to how to crush opposition.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion; Is Castro a Communist or a Caudillo? He is both, and much, much more. He truly is a master manipulator who will do whatever is required to maintain his grip on the power structure of his native Cuba. He is also an egotist extraordinaire whose adaptability permits him to feed his appetite for self-esteem. Whoever succeeds him and under whatever conditions he is succeeded, his successor has an unenviable task ahead of him. Replacing a popular authoritarian ruler is never easy, but filling the shoes of a human institution like Castro invites seemingly insurmountable comparisons that will make it hard for any successor to live up to. Fidel Castro absolutely "is" Cuba and I predict that his legacy to Cuba will be disarray, for without a mechanism for peaceful succession, one which Fidel could never permit to exist while still living, Cuba will be left with an enormous void to fill.

ENDNOTES

1. Peter G. Bourne, Fidel: A Biography of Fidel Castro, p. 17.
2. Ibid.
3. Nathaniel Weyl, Red Star Over Cuba, The Russian Assault On The Western Hemisphere, p.124.
4. Tad Szulc, Fidel, A Critical Portrait, p.107.
5. Peter G. Bourne, Fidel: A Biography of Fidel Castro, p.23.
6. Tad Szulc, Fidel, A Critical Portrait, p.136.
7. Ibid. p.138.
8. Peter G. Bourne, Fidel: A Biography of Fidel Castro, pp.35, 36, 37.
9. Theodore Draper, Castroism: Theory and Practice, p.6.
10. Tad Szulc, Fidel, A Critical Portrait, p.224.
11. Theodore Draper, Castroism: Theory and Practice, p.7.
12. Ibid. p.8,9.
13. U.S. Department of State, Cuba, p.3.
14. Ibid. p.4.
15. Ibid. pp.4,5.
16. Theodore Draper, Castroism: Theory and Practice, pp.21-26.
17. Ibid. p.59.
18. Andres Suarez, Cuba: Castroism and Communism, 1959-1966, p.65.
19. Jaime Suchlicki, Cuba, Castro, and Revolution, p.71.
20. Carlos Franqui, Family Portrait with Fidel, p.160.
21. Peter G. Bourne, Fidel: a biography of Fidel Castro, p.273.
22. Theodore Draper, Castroism: Theory and Practice, p.40.
23. Ibid. p.41.
24. Ibid. p.48.
25. Ibid. p.49.

26. Edward Gonzalez and David Ronfeldt, Castro, Cuba, and the World, p.19.

27. Ibid. pp.19, 20.

28. Ibid. p.20.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Bourne, Peter, G., Fidel: a biography of Fidel Castro, New York: Dodd, Mead & Company Inc., 1986.
2. Draper, Theodore, Castroism: Theory and Practice, New York: Fredrick A. Praeger, Inc., Publishers, 1965.
3. Franqui, Carlos, Family portrait with Fidel, New York: Random House Inc., 1984.
4. Gonzalez, Edward, and Ronfeldt, David. Castro, Cuba, and the World, Santa Monica, Ca.: Rand Publishers, 1986.
5. Kissinger, Henry, For The Record, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1978.
6. Kissinger, Henry, White House Years, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979.
7. Kissinger, Henry, Years Of Upheaval, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982.
8. Llerena, Mario, The Unsuspected Revolution, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978.
9. Rivero, Nicolas, Castro's Cuba; America's Dilemma, New York: Van Rees Press, 1962.
10. Suarez, Andres, Cuba: Castroism and Communism, 1959-1966, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1967.
11. Suchlicki, Jaime, Cuba, Castro, and Revolution, Miami, Florida: University of Miami Press, 1972.
12. Suchlicki, Jaime, Cuba From Columbus to Castro, McLean, Virginia: Brassey's (U.S.), Inc., 1990.
13. Szulc, Tad, Fidel: a critical Portrait, New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1986.
14. Thomas, Hugh, Cuba: The Pursuit of Freedom, New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1971.
15. U.S. Department of State. Cuba. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State. 1966.
16. Weyl, Nathaniel, Red Star Over Cuba, The Russian Assault On The Western Hemisphere, New York: The Devin-Adair Company, Publishers, 1960.